

Glenda Wiles

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Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2007 7:19 PM
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Subject: [Probably SPAM] - Bitterroot NF, Rombo Mountain Fire Update, August 9, 8 pm

For Immediate Release**Contact:** Fire Information
406-821-0082**Date:** August 9, 2007 8 p.m.**Rombo Mountain Fire 3,300 Acres**

West Fork, Mont. ? The Rombo Mountain Fire grew to 3,300 acres on Thursday. The growth occurred primarily on the northern edge of the fire where several hot spots have persisted and to the northeast in West Creek. A red flag warning has been issued for Friday from noon through 9 p.m. with predicted hot, dry, windy weather and possible thunderstorms. The fire was lightning caused and has been burning since July 31. It is located 16 miles south of Conner, MT and 4 miles northeast of Painted Rocks Lake.

Actions Thursday included water drops from helicopters; cooling of hot spots on the far western end of the fire; and reinforcing the area east of road 5715A directly north of the west side of the fire so it can be used as a fireline should the fire move to the northwest. Additionally, equipment was moved in to begin construction on a line removing all vegetation in a swath approximately 1 1/2 miles northwest of the fire. The swath would be a wider extension of a hand line leading from a switchback on road 5715A through Buck Saddle following a ridge in a northeasterly direction to the 2000 Pat Creek Fire burned area.

The Painted Rocks Fire and Rescue and West Fork Fire Companies are finalizing a structure

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protection plan on private land from the vicinity of the Trapper Creek Job Corp Center south to the Slate Creek Boat Ramp at Painted Rocks Lake and the private land along the Nez Perce Road. The plan includes assessing each structure, mapping structure locations and describing equipment available or needed to implement the structure protection plan in coordination with incident management.

Plans for Friday are to begin cutting the vegetation along the swath; continue to reinforce the fire line; and continue to cool hot spots on the north and east edges of the fire. The operators involved with cutting the swath will begin their shift very early in the morning and will end their shift earlier than usual for safety reasons. They will be working out ahead of the fire with a red flag warning predicted for the afternoon and evening and the incident managers want them out of the woods by late afternoon.

The closure order remains in effect and fire and forest officials ask the public to cooperate with the closure for public and firefighter safety. Maps and full descriptions of the closed area are available at Forest offices, and on line at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot. Although there are area closures around the Rombo Mountain and Tin Cup fires, most of the Bitterroot National Forest remains open to the public for hiking, fishing and other recreational activities. The Forest is under Stage 2 fire restrictions which prohibit campfires and smoking other than in a vehicle, building or cleared area due to the high fire danger.

A total of 165 personnel are assigned to the fire and additional firefighting crews and helicopters to provide support have been requested, but may not be available due to the large number of fires burning in Montana and other states at this time.

Public and firefighter safety are the highest priority that Svalberg's incident management team, in coordination with the local forest personnel, take into consideration when planning and implementing fire management actions.

Information about the fire including up-to-date news, the closure order and map, and photos have been posted on www.inciweb.org. You can call fire information at (406) 821-0082 for additional information.

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